

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Office of Subsistence Management  
Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program

Pilot Station Sonar Technician Support

Final Report for Study 02-009  
(Includes 00-024 and 01-018)

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## Final Report Summary Page

**Title:** Pilot Station Sonar Technician Support

**Study Number:** 02-009 (includes 00-024 and 01-018)

**Investigator:** Jennifer C. Hooper, Association of Village Council Presidents, Inc. (AVCP), Natural Resources Department

**Geographic Area:** The Yukon River, Pilot Station, Alaska

**Information Type:** Stock Status and Trends

**Issue(s) Addressed:** Staff support and assistance to the Alaska Department of Fish & Game in sonar operations and hiring of local technician familiar with the area and sonar operations

**Study Cost:** \$20,000

**Study Duration:** June 1 to September 13, 2002

**Abstract:** This project is funded specifically to hire a local technician from the village of Pilot Station to assist the ADF&G in the Pilot Station Sonar operations. It not only involves the ADF&G, AVCP, the local tribal office and technician, but also the whole community of subsistence users. AVCP, in the first year of this project worked with the local tribal office and ADF&G to announce the job opening, to hire and then train the technician chosen. Donald Kelly, a local from Pilot Station, was hired and returned as the technician for the next two years of the project. This particular project continued to build strong, existing relationships between AVCP, ADF&G and the local tribal office, and the community for that matter.

**Key Words:** ADF&G, AVCP, capacity building, commercial, Pilot Station Sonar, salmon, Subsistence, Yukon River

**Data Information:** *Description* – There was no biological or related-type data collected or analyzed under this project. It was a project funded specifically to hire a local technician from the village of Pilot Station to assist the ADF&G in sonar operations.

**Report Availability:** Please contact either the author or Alaska Resources Library and Information Services to obtain a copy of this report.

**Citation:** N/A

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## **INTRODUCTION**

For the three years included in this final report, 2000, 2001 and 2002, the purpose of this project was to provide the Alaska Department of Fish & Game's (ADF&G) Commercial Fisheries Division – Pilot Station Sonar project, a fisheries technician. This technician was intended to be, and was in all three years, a local resident from the community of Pilot Station. A few additional components of this project, which were not always outlined or visible, in hiring a local technician, was building capacity of and for the local tribal council and village community and to offer employment in a region where few jobs are available.

This particular project continued to build on the strong, existing relationships between the Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP), ADF&G and the local tribal office, and the community for that matter. The technicians hired by AVCP have come back year after year, making their training on going, while building their capacity as fisheries technicians. They gained the knowledge and expertise with their on-the-job training, which then makes them more valuable and highly competitive if they were to ever enter the job market in a fisheries-related field. For example, many of our previous technicians have gone on to become employees of the ADF&G for the same summer projects. This furthers their own individual capacity building (which is applied to the local community in some way or another) and experiences and allows for another local person to start the process of building their own capacity.

The Pilot Station sonar not only involves the ADF&G, AVCP, the local tribal office and technician, but also the whole community of subsistence users. The fish collected in the test fishery conducted on-site are ultimately given to the local people. This daily interaction helps to educate all stakeholders of each other and promotes the sharing of all sorts (i.e. fish, information, traditional knowledge and wisdom, etc.).

AVCP has been successful in past years working with ADF&G in fusing their relationship by supplying local people on various projects operated by ADF&G. The local technicians were provided a direct and meaningful role; while at the same time learning (or continuing to learn) project operations.

## **OBJECTIVES**

1. To hire and train a local village member knowledgeable with the area to be put on as staff to a large, on-going project.
2. To continue to strengthen the existing relationships between the ADF&G, AVCP, and the local tribal office and community.

3. To provide economic opportunity for the community.
4. To extend the work period by approximately four weeks, so as to discourage the need for the ADF&G to conduct an emergency hire late in season.
5. To further support and strengthen existing capacity building operations and to work at broadening links with the local entities for future possibilities.

## **METHODS**

AVCP, in the first year of this project (2000) worked with the local tribal office and ADF&G to announce the job opening, to hire and then train the technician chosen. After Donald Kelly was hired that first year, he came back for the next two year's operational seasons as the technician and so it was not necessary to announce, hire and train someone new.

The technician's work schedule usually began on or about June 1 and continued through on or about mid-September. The length of time was obviously dependent on the corresponding annual budgeted amount and then the hours worked within the schedule. The work schedule in the last year (2002) was approximately four weeks longer than the two previous years and was due to a request from the previous ADF&G Regional Sonar Supervisor. This removed the need for any emergency hires that might have been necessary, by the ADF&G, towards the end of the season.

As was stated in each proposal and Investigation Plan, if the previous technician was not re-hired for the next year's position AVCP would work with the local tribal office to post the job-opening announcement and compile all applications. AVCP would then work with the local tribal office and the ADF&G to choose the qualified applicant. As mentioned above, the technician hired in 2000 came back in 2001 and 2002 and so we did not need to rehire and train someone new.

## **RESULTS**

### ***2000***

Study Number: FIS 00-024

Cooperative Agreement Number: 701810G054

Amount Obligated: \$16,350

Donald Kelly, a local individual from Pilot Station, was re-hired and his period of work was June 25 to September 17. He had been a fisheries technician the previous year through R&E funding. Throughout the season I had no complaints from either Donald or the ADF&G crew regarding each other's workings and he got all his paperwork to me in a timely manner. It seemed Donald worked well with the crew and vice versa. This is illustrated by a letter of support I received from Steve Parry, ADF&G's previous regional sonar supervisor at Pilot Station, for Donald's return in 2001.

### ***2001***

Study Number: FIS01-018

Cooperative Agreement Number: 701811M473

Amount Obligated: \$20,400

Donald Kelly returned as our fisheries technician. His period of work was June 12 to September 2. As before I received no complaints from either Donald or ADF&G and he was requested to return in 2002. Donald worked well with the crew and vice versa. This is again demonstrated through a letter of support from Gene Sandone, the ADF&G's AYK Regional Supervisor, for continued funding for Donald's return in 2002.

### ***2002***

Study Number: FIS 02-009

Cooperative Agreement Number: 701812M376

Amount Obligated: \$20,000

Donald Kelly was hired once again as the fisheries technician. His period of work was June 6 to September 2. One key component different with this year's project was the addition of the requirement that Donald and AVCP participate and hold community presentations on the sonar project. Dario Notti, Resource Specialist from AVCP, facilitated and planned the logistics for the presentations to the community and the schools. He assisted Donald in presenting materials to different classrooms and the community on December 10, 2002 in Pilot Station. Dario had made a trip out to the sonar project earlier in the summer and had taken several photographs of all aspects of the operations. So, Donald also worked on December 10, giving presentations to the classes at the school and the community.

## **DISCUSSION**

One of AVCP's goals is to get local people interested and involved in all arenas possible. With respect to employment opportunities we strive first for local hire and include the local tribal offices in all instances possible. This may include working with them to hire a local person or by contracting with them to hire and pay that local person.

For each new season/RFP's for an existing project (or even a new one) the AVCP Natural Resources Department makes an effort to contact the appropriate tribal council office and asks for their input, as well as whether they would like to apply themselves or for if they want AVCP to continue to seek funding. My goal, as the Director of Natural Resources, is for them to eventually become comfortable enough in their own operations that they will want to submit proposals on their own, for themselves.

This particular project continued to build strong, existing relationships between AVCP, ADF&G and the local tribal office, and the community for that matter. The technicians hired by AVCP have come back year after year, making their training on going, while building their capacity as fisheries technicians. They gain the knowledge and expertise with their on-the-job training, which then makes these technicians valuable and highly competitive if they were to ever enter the job market in a fisheries-related field.

It was obviously apparent that the ADF&G was also in support of this project in that they supplied letters of support for the proposals submitted after the first year of funding.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

This project provided both technical and financial support to the community of Pilot Station as well as technician support to the ADF&G. A local person was hired as a fisheries technician who gained valuable knowledge and experience. The ADF&G benefited in receiving this local person with his existing knowledge of the fish and the area.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Local people should be included in any project, whether it be operated by ADF&G, USFWS, AVCP or any other agency or organization. The knowledge they have of their area is invaluable

and will add to the success of any project. The knowledge and experience they would gain would in turn be very beneficial to them.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Subsistence Management, provided a total of \$56,750 in funding support for this project through the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program, under agreement numbers: 701810G054, 701811M473 and 701812M376.

I would also like to acknowledge Donald Kelly of Pilot Station for his interest and continued commitment to this project and the program, the Pilot Station Traditional Council for their support and assistance when needed, the ADF&G for their support and to AVCP for their involvement and working for tribal involvement in all aspects.

### **LITERATURE CITED**

Not applicable.

### **TEXT FOOTNOTES**

Not applicable.

### **FIGURES**

Not applicable.



## **TABLES**

Not applicable.

## **APPENDICES**

Not applicable.

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